

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An absorbent article comprising:
an outer cover material;
a liner; and
an absorbent structure positioned between the outer cover material and the liner, the absorbent structure including a front portion, a rear portion, and a middle portion, the middle portion positioned between the front portion and the rear portion, the middle portion being narrower than the front portion, the front portion extending from a front edge of the absorbent structure to the narrower middle portion, the front portion defining an outermost lateral periphery, the front portion having a width, the absorbent structure further comprising a pair of opposing lateral flaps connected to the middle portion and folded at least onto the middle portion of the absorbent structure, each of the flaps, when in an unfolded state, extending beyond the outermost lateral periphery, the middle portion having a basis weight where the lateral flaps have been folded that is at least twice the basis weight of the front portion where the flaps are not located, each of the flaps having a width adjacent to the middle portion that is from about 25% to 100% of the width of the middle portion, wherein the absorbent structure defines a length and wherein the pair of opposing lateral flaps extend only a portion of the length of the absorbent structure adjacent to the middle portion.
2. Canceled
3. (Previously Presented) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the middle portion is narrower than the front portion and the rear portion.
4. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein each of the flaps has a width adjacent to the middle portion that is from about 33% to 100% of the width of the middle portion.
5. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein each of the flaps has a width adjacent to the middle portion that is from about 50% to 100% of the width of the middle portion.

6. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the absorbent structure has an hourglass-like shape.

7 - 11. Canceled

12. (Currently Amended) An absorbent article as defined in claim ~~[[11]]~~ 1, ~~wherein the lateral flaps are connected to the middle portion and~~ wherein each of the flaps is separated from the front portion by a first slit and separated from the rear portion by a second slit.

13. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 12, wherein the absorbent structure defines a longitudinal axis that extends from the front portion to the rear portion, the first slits and the second slits being substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

14. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 12, wherein the absorbent structure defines a longitudinal axis that extends from the front portion to the rear portion, the first slits and the second slits extending generally in a diagonal direction in relation to the longitudinal axis.

15. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the absorbent structure has a generally uniform basis weight when in an unfolded state.

16. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 12, wherein the absorbent structure defines a longitudinal axis that extends from the front portion to the rear portion, the first slits and the second slits extending in a non-linear fashion in relation to the longitudinal axis.

17. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the absorbent structure has a non-uniform basis weight when in an unfolded state, the middle portion having a higher basis weight than the front portion and the rear portion.

18. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the absorbent structure has a non-uniform basis weight when in an unfolded state, the lateral flaps having a basis weight greater than the middle portion.

19. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the absorbent structure has a non-uniform basis weight when in an unfolded state,

the front portion and the rear portion having a higher basis weight than the middle portion.

20. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the absorbent structure has a non-uniform basis weight when in an unfolded state, the middle portion having a basis weight greater than the lateral flaps.

21. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the absorbent article is one of diapers, child's training pants, feminine care articles, and incontinence articles.

22. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the absorbent structure comprises superabsorbent particles.

23. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the absorbent structure comprises pulp fibers and superabsorbent particles.

24. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the absorbent structure comprises an air formed web.

25. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the absorbent structure has a basis weight of from about 100 gsm to about 2,000 gsm.

26. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein once each of the lateral flaps have been folded, the middle portion includes areas that have a basis weight that is at least twice the basis weight of the front portion and the rear portion.

27. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein once each of the lateral flaps have been folded, the middle portion includes areas that have a basis weight that is at least 150% greater than the basis weight of the front portion and the rear portion.

28. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein once each of the lateral flaps have been folded, the middle portion includes areas that have a basis weight that is at least 3 times the basis weight of the front portion and the rear portion.

29. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the front portion includes a center area and two opposing lateral areas and the rear

portion also includes a center area and two opposing lateral areas, and wherein, once each of the lateral flaps have been folded, the middle portion, the center area of the front portion, and the center area of the rear portion each have a basis weight that is at least 150% greater than the basis weight of the two opposing lateral areas of the front portion and the two opposing lateral areas of the rear portion.

30. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein the front portion includes a center area and two opposing lateral areas and the rear portion also includes a center area and two opposing lateral areas, and wherein, once each of the lateral flaps have been folded, the middle portion, the center area of the front portion, and the center area of the rear portion each have a basis weight that is at least twice the basis weight of the two opposing lateral areas of the front portion and the two opposing lateral areas of the rear portion.

31. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 29, wherein, once each of the lateral flaps have been folded, the middle portion has a basis weight that is at least 3 times the basis weight of the two opposing lateral areas of the front portion and the two opposing lateral areas of the rear portion, and the center area of the front portion and the center area of the rear portion have a basis weight that is at least twice the basis weight of the two opposing lateral areas of the front portion and the two opposing lateral areas of the rear portion.

32. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein once each of the lateral flaps have been folded, the middle portion comprises two layers of material.

33. (Original) An absorbent article as defined in claim 1, wherein once each of the lateral flaps have been folded, the middle portion comprises three layers of material.

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